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SPANISH RENAISSANCE.

No fairer spot on the inhabitable globe could greet the eye of an army, than was offered by the Plains of Granada, when the Spanish troops of Ferdinand and Isabella wound their way through the narrow passes of the Sierra Nevada mountains, and came down by the banks of the Guadalquivir river. Before them was the city of Granada, built upon two lofty hills separated by the sluggish Darro, and capped on one side by the Alcazar, a fort of singular strength, and upon the other by the royal palace of the Alhambra, a palace capable of containing 40,000 men, having its harem, its courts, its suites of rooms, its fountains, its luxurious baths and stately halls, in fact so magnificent was it for even those magnificent times, that the Moors believed alchemy had been the instrument of its construction. The plain about the city extended for over one hundred miles in circumference, was in the highest state of cultivation, orchards and vineyards thrived upon the sides of the protecting mountains, and fields of waving grain or gardens of citron, figs and mulberries dotted the level. The air was balmy and inviting, and the odor of grapes and flowers was borne into the city itself. The Moors were reasonable in their belief that the Paradise of the Prophet was located directly over this fertile spot.

Into this fair country came the Spanish forces to exact tribute from the Moorish king, who had with rare temerity responded to Ferdinand's demand for tribute, with the daring words: "Tell your sovereign that the Kings of Granada who used to pay tribute in money to the Castilian Crown are dead. Our mint at present coins nothing but blades of scimitars and heads of lances."

Boabdil, the son of this stewart king, bore the shock of the Spanish war, and fought desperately for his throne, but the savagery of the Castilian was stronger than the arms of the Moors, and Boabdil fled from his capital, the exile ruler of Granada.

Upon their return from the war, the Spaniards were filled with the luxury they had seen and brought with them the tastes they had acquired, the spoil from Granada's cities whetted the thirst for other splendor, and thus began the most brilliant era of Spanish art, and the people were encouraged by examples of elegance to cultivate, and indulge in more artistic displays, to elaborate their homes and give free vent to their natural love of elaboration and embellishment.

Their architecture was borne down with suggestions, panels succeeded panels, and columns, each handsomer than its companion bore up the elaborate roof, everything was made to conform with its neighbor, and whilst partaking much of the lightness and beauty of the French it was more substantial, more consistent, more symmetrical in design, there was ever a motive present for each action, and a medallion seemed to have some higher purpose than to serve as a mere ornament. Nor was it singular that such elegance should be favored, for no Court excelled that of Madrid in the regal qualities of its accompaniments, and the royal style of its entertainments. To the jeweled guests that crowded the halls and drawing-rooms of the king these elaborate surroundings were but fitting frames, and each suited admirably the requirements of the other.

There is hardly any period in history that offers the opportunities for the selection of rich examples equal to this, and we have taken advantage of it to give a series of "Studies" in Spanish Renaissance, as applied to modern uses, which will extend over the principal apartments of the house, showing their character of ornamentation, the eccentricities of their style, the beautiful detail of their work, and the thoroughness of their execution.

We have selected the dining-room as the subject for our first study, and the manner in which the artist has treated it is no exaggeration upon the original style.

The woodwork should be mahogany, and,

as may be seen, requires considerable carving: ebonized wood, of course, is also suited, but if one wishes to be in accord more strictly with the custom of the true Spanish style, mahogany is the proper wood to employ. The carving need not, by any means, be made expensive, and it must not be thought because the plan itself is elaborate in appearance, that the cost of production is necessarily extreme, for it may be gotten up in an imitation of some rich wood, and that imitation may extend through all the materials required, and bring the expense into the possibilities of a moderate expenditure. The details of the carving may be sufficiently defined in the plate to enable the designer to follow its principles to some extent in his own, and it would be well to observe the same character, so far as practicable.

The walls are covered with leather of a rich yellow hue, ornamented in squares with a raised or embossed centre piece upon each. The dado should be of brilliantly blue tiles, so arranged with others of a somewhat different pattern about the edges as to form a border, which adds very much to the complete appearance of the large panel-like spaces. The mantel and chimney piece is very suggestive, the manner of building the clock into the shelf itself is uncommon in this country, and will undoubtedly be appreciated and utilized by some one. The curtain hiding the grate is another most desirable feature, and arranged as here shown, could be applied to some of our own city houses during the Summer, with

to the effect to place a bar from the side wall to the pillar at the steps, having flung over it a portiere of some showy material.

The ceiling is entirely of stucco, wood not being used in Spanish work of this kind. The stucco may, of course, be treated as simply or as ornately as the means and disposition of the owner will suggest. With the Spaniards the highly elaborated character prevailed, and their ceilings were picked out in gold and silver, with the panel paintings on canvas.

The chairs and table shown at the lower part of the plate are in strict conformity with the style of the room itself, and made in proportion to the other details.

Next month this series of studies will be continued by giving a parlor in the same Spanish Renaissance style, and the opportunity given for fine display in such a room has been judiciously taken advantage of by the artist.

THE PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN FOR CARPETS AND HANGINGS.

BY GILBERT R. REDGRAVE.

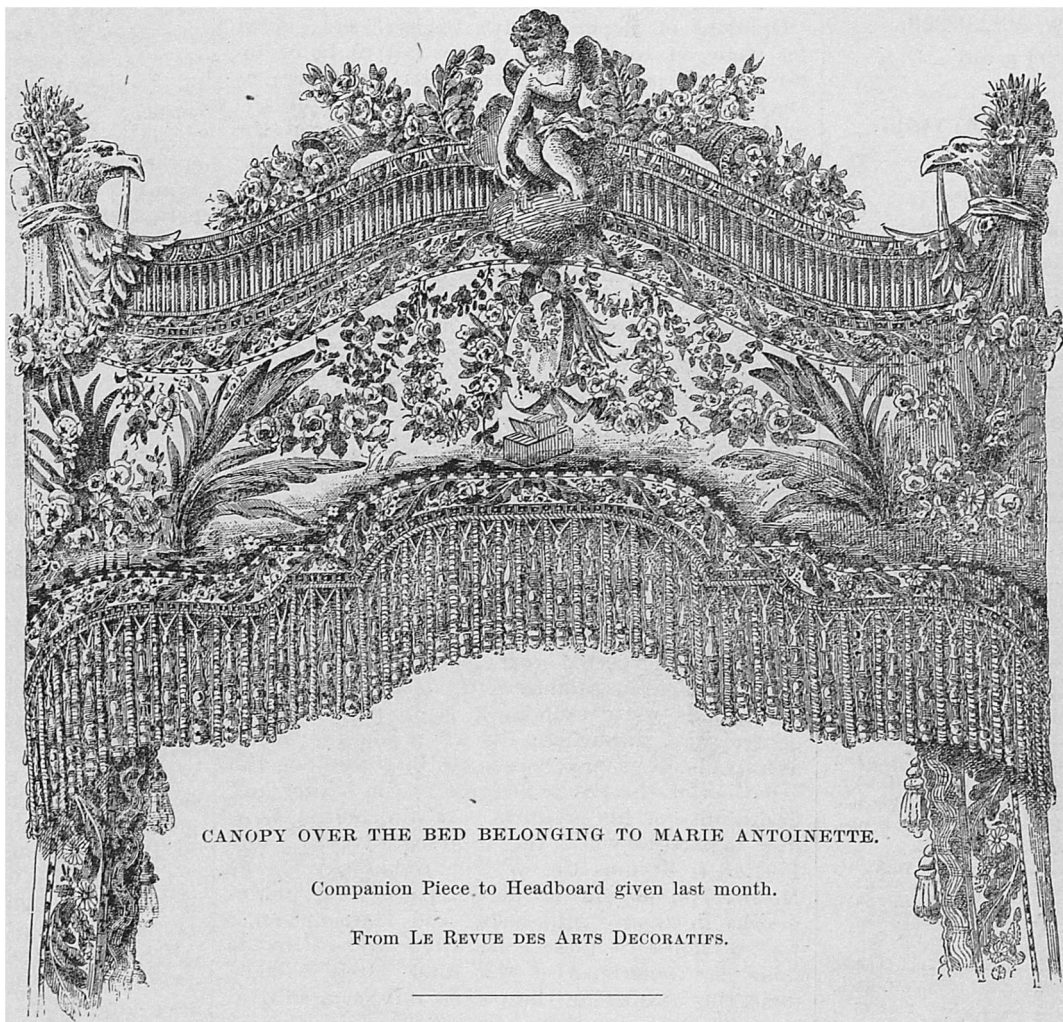
BETWEEN thirty and forty years ago a band of ardent reformers of the popular taste conceived the notion of collecting together—and publicly exhibiting—various articles of furniture, textile fab-

rics, and drinking vessels, which, judged by certain standards they had set up, and designated as "true principles," were found wanting, either as being bad in design, or false in principle. This collection formed the contents of what was styled "The Chamber of Horrors," and, as would naturally be expected, it attracted a considerable amount of attention. Manufacturers, who had with very considerable trouble and expense, brought out some striking novelty, found very shortly afterwards that their treasured production was occupying a prominent place in this ill-omened chamber, and loud complaints arose on all sides against this arrogant attempt to sit in judgment upon the public taste. Of course, the chamber was speedily closed, and manufacturers were left to their own devices, but not until the fact had been to some extent recognized that there were certain principles which it was possible to violate, and certain canons of good taste which might be applied even to such simple matters as the form of a teacup or the pattern of a carpet.

Nowadays, when everyone is somewhat of an artist, and when taste in all these

matters and a correct appreciation of the art of designing has made such giant strides among us, we can scarcely believe that there is any necessity for a pillory for bad art; but it is surprising, when we come to consider carefully the objects with which we are surrounded in our homes, or which we encounter in our daily walks, and apply to them the principles which have been formulated for our guidance, how sadly they are found to sin in matters of good taste.

In briefly discussing the designing of carpets and curtains, we have no wish to bring together a string of truisms with respect to the general principles which should guide the designer, neither can we hope, within the narrow limits of the space at our disposal, to indicate more than the veriest outline of the laws against which it is dangerous to offend, in the choice of our hangings and floral coverings. It is fortunate for us that the advance in the popular taste, to which we have just referred, has led to a more marked improvement in rugs and carpets than perhaps in any other department of our manufactures, and we shall not have to complain of any glaring offence against good taste. At the first great Exhibition in London in 1851, when speaking of the carpets and rugs, the reporter on "Design" was forced to complain of the frequent attempts at pictorial display on the part of the hearthrug makers, who aimed at giving us a truthful and realistic representation of



CANOPY OVER THE BED BELONGING TO MARIE ANTOINETTE.

Companion Piece to Headboard given last month.

FROM LE REVUE DES ARTS DECORATIFS.

considerable profit in an artistic sense. The short, heavy pillars supporting the mantel at either end, are worthy of careful study, and with the winged animals above are fine examples of the Spanish style; the bric-a-brac shelf near the ceiling line may be made very attractive, if adorned with suitable ornaments, and finishes off the entire mantel most acceptably. The small panel paintings are upon canvas, as is the custom largely in Europe; the diamond shaped panels in the various columns bear grotesque heads symbolic of the Renaissance, and portraying the love of the fabulous in the minds of the people. The hangings at the windows should be heavy tapestry, brilliantly colored, and having across the top a short, richly adorned curtain, set in between the frame of the opening. As the prevailing disposition is to have ornaments, bric-a-brac and the like in unusual and odd shapes, it will be noticed that the hanging cabinets and shelves have been made to conform to this idea and the general style of the room. The end of the apartment, as shown in the sectional view at the lower right hand corner of the plate, is shaped like a bay-window, and approached by three steps, bringing one upon a platform looking out into a conservatory beyond. This bay-window is supported by a richly embellished column and a short balustrade. Similar hangings to those used elsewhere in the room may be had here, and, as will be seen, it adds much

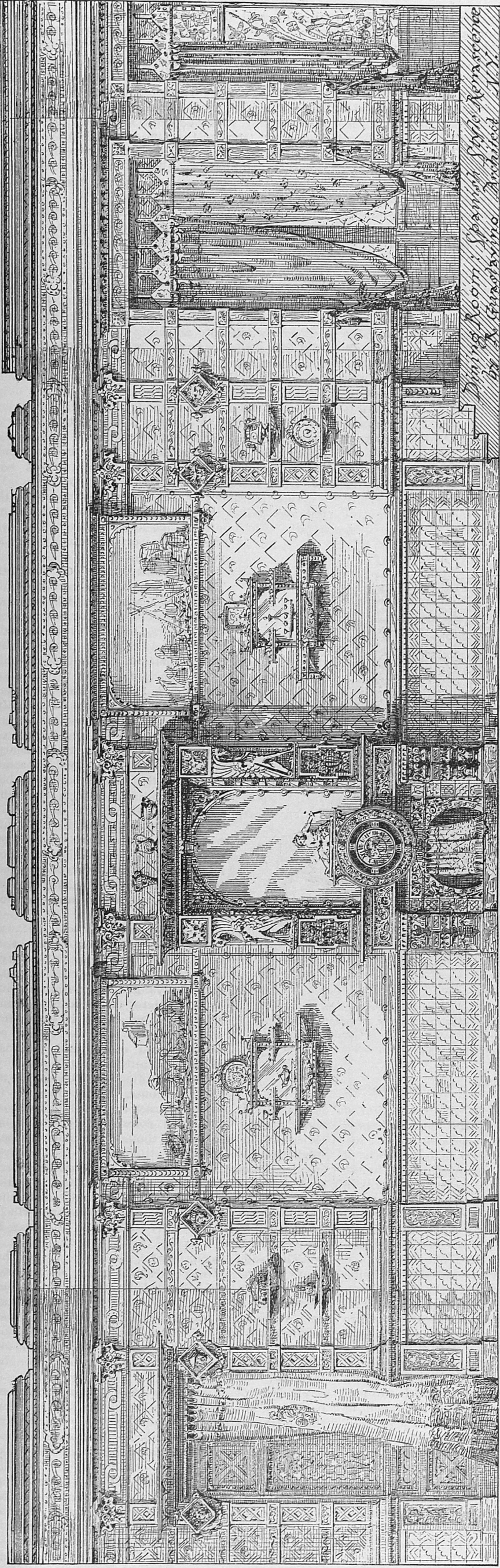
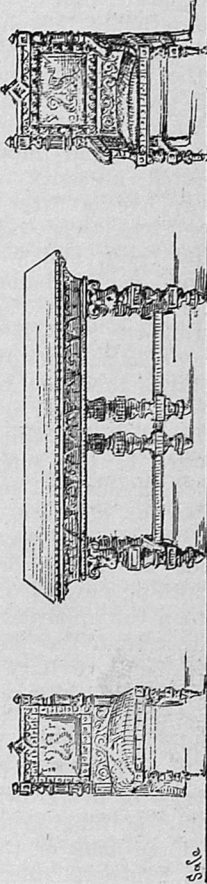
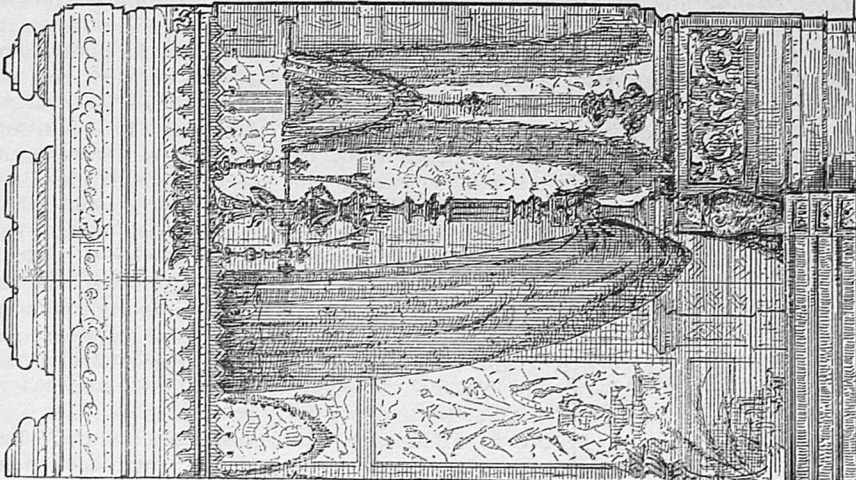


Plate 1.
Dining room.



STUDIES in Spanish Renaissance.
Designed by
Raphael Gruetavino Archt. et New-York.